





# MERSHON CENTER for International Security Studies

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- Apr 22** **Stephen Brooks**  
04/22/2015, -  
Woody Hayes Speaker Series
- Apr 24** **Mershon Happy Hours**  
04/24/2015, -  
Internal Event
- Apr 30** **Hal Brands**  
04/30/2015, -  
Woody Hayes Speaker Series
- May 01** **Military Frontiers: A Graduate Student Symposium**  
05/01/2015, -  
Mershon Center Conference
- May 02** **Military Frontiers: A Graduate Student Symposium**  
05/02/2015, -  
Mershon Center Conference

## ARCHIVED EVENTS

Academic Year

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## SEARCH



## EVENTS CALENDAR

National Security Speaker Series

### SARAH KREPS

*"Mechanisms of Morality: Why the U.S. Public Supports Humanitarian Interventions"*

Wednesday, April 15, 2015 3:30PM - 5:00PM

Mershon Center for International Security Studies  
1501 Neil Ave. Columbus, OH 43201

[Register for this event here.](#)
[To read the associated paper by Dr. Kreps, please click here.](#)

**Sarah Kreps** is associate professor in the Department of Government, co-director of the Cornell Law School International Law-International Relations Colloquium, and affiliate of the Einaudi Center for International Studies' Foreign Policy Initiative. Her research focuses on issues of international security, particularly questions of conflict and cooperation, alliance politics, political economy, and nuclear proliferation. Current projects examine the effect of war on domestic institutions, the ethics of conflict, and the relationship between financial costs of war and democratic accountability.

Kreps's work has appeared or is forthcoming in journals such as *American Political Science Review*, *Journal of Politics*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *Security Studies*, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, and *Political Science Quarterly*, among others. Her first book is *Coalitions of Convenience: United States Military Interventions after the Cold War* (Oxford University Press, 2011). It looks at instances of American military interventions after the Cold War and shows why multilateralism often prevails for even the most powerful countries such as the United States.

Kreps teaches classes on international law, weapons proliferation, peace and conflict studies, and international relations theory. She has a B.A. from Harvard, M.Sc. from Oxford, and Ph.D. from Georgetown University. Before going to graduate school, she served as an acquisitions and foreign area officer in the United States Air Force. She is a life member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

### Abstract

This research investigates public attitudes towards humanitarian intervention, first whether support is higher than alternative uses of force, and second how much the humanitarian aspect of these interventions matter relative to other characteristics such as multilateralism and strategic interests. It answers these questions with a survey experiment that compares support for humanitarian intervention with baseline intervention scenarios and also probes the mechanisms through which humanitarian interventions generate support.

We develop and test three categories of mechanisms: 1) internalized humanitarian norms, 2) instrumental signals about risk and cost, and 3) strategic interests. Our findings suggest that the public is more favorably disposed toward humanitarian intervention, with most of that increase in support resulting from the view that there is a moral obligation to intervene to defend women and children, which offers support for the internalization of norms mechanism. Perceptions that humanitarian intervention will be either less costly or have important strategic consequences were far less consequential.

The findings have important implications for theories about post-Cold War intervention norms as well as for the circumstances under which states use military force.



**Sarah Kreps**  
Associate Professor  
Cornell University

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